

Database Searching

What is a database?

- A **database** is defined as a place where information is collected, stored, and organized. This information can also be viewed, managed, and updated.
 - Examples of Databases:
 - ProQuest
 - EBSCO

Accessing the database

- You access the databases through your Stratford Moodle account
 - Visit <https://online.stratford.edu> and log in with your Stratford Moodle account information
 - Once logged in go to Library Online and select “How to Access the Research Databases”. This will take you to the Access Research Databases page.

If you DO NOT know your topic

- If you don't know the topic that you want to search in the database then you should...
 - Consult with your professor about determining a topic
 - Look at major subject and concept areas that are covered in class

If you DO know your topic

- Search the database for exact phrases using quotation marks
 - Example: “cities in the United States”
- Search for key words that are related to your idea or concept
 - Example: cities, United States
- Search for concepts or ideas that are not covered by your keywords

Saving Articles

- Saving what you find in the database is ESSENTIAL. This will allow you to access your articles from home and school!
- My Research
 - My Research is a tool that is found in many of the research databases. You can create an account and save your articles here. If you save them on My Research then you can access the articles and your searches from anywhere.
- You can also print out any articles that you find.
- Another option is to email the articles to either your Stratford or personal email.

Searching Best Practices

- Exact phrases:
 - If you want to search for something as an exact phrase, enclose the phrase in quotes (“”).
 - For example, searching for “*cities in the United States*” returns only results that have those five words in order. If you just searched *cities in the United States*, it will bring back results that have those words in any order.
- Using AND, OR, and NOT
 - AND is used in order to narrow a search and retrieve articles that contain all of the words used in the phrase. Example *countries AND cities*
 - OR is used to broaden a search and retrieve articles that contain either of the words or phrases that you search. Example *countries OR cities*
 - NOT is used to narrow the search and retrieve articles that do NOT contain the word or phrase after the word NOT. Example *countries NOT cities*
- Full Text
 - Clicking on full text allows you to find articles that are available in their entirety. ****You always want to select full text when searching for scholarly articles.**
- Peer Reviewed
 - Clicking on peer reviewed pulls up articles that have gone through an official process where they were reviewed and approved by the author’s peers. These peers are experts in the same subject area as the author. ****You always want to select peer reviewed when searching for scholarly articles.**
- Advanced Search
 - Use Advanced Search if the basic search does not provide all of the filters you want to use before you begin searching.

Contact your Campus Library for a more in-depth tutorial on this topic!